

Document made available under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)

International application number: PCT/GB05/000075

International filing date: 13 January 2005 (13.01.2005)

Document type: Certified copy of priority document

Document details: Country/Office: GB
Number: 0407540.4
Filing date: 02 April 2004 (02.04.2004)

Date of receipt at the International Bureau: 02 March 2005 (02.03.2005)

Remark: Priority document submitted or transmitted to the International Bureau in compliance with Rule 17.1(a) or (b)



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PCT/GB 2005/000075



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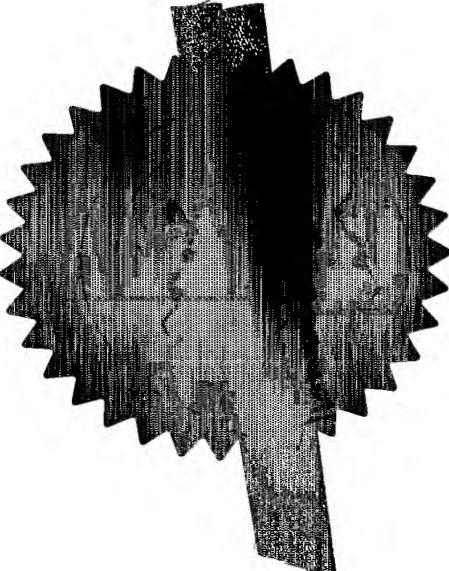
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William Morely

Dated 25 January 2005

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The Patent Office

Cardiff Road
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1. Your reference

P2547/1/GB

2. Patent application number

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0407540.4

02 APR 2004

3. Full name, address and postcode of the or of each applicant (underline all surnames)

Tabletalk Media Limited
4th Floor, 17c Curzon Street
Mayfair, London
W1Y 7FE

Patents ADP number (if you know it)

884 3351001

If the applicant is a corporate body, give the country/state of its incorporation

England

4. Title of the invention

Improvements in or relating to table coverings

5. Name of your agent (if you have one)

"Address for service" in the United Kingdom to which all correspondence should be sent (including the postcode)

CASTLES
1 King Street
Bakewell
Derbyshire DE45 1DZ

Patents ADP number (if you know it)

7336522002

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Country

Priority application number
(if you know it)Date of filing
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Number of earlier application

Date of filing
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Continuation sheets of this form

Description


4

Claim(s)

2

Abstract

Drawing(s)

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Priority documents

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Statement of inventorship and right to grant of a patent (Patents Form 7/77)

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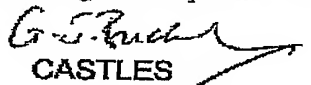
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11.

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Date

02/04/2004

12. Name and daytime telephone number of person to contact in the United Kingdom

G.J. BUCKLEY

01629 813505

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Patents Form 1/77

CONFIDENTIALImprovements in or Relating to Table Coverings.

This invention relates to table coverings, and in particular to such coverings which are particularly suitable for use in a commercial eating and/or drinking establishments such as restaurants or cafés.

In such establishments it is well known to locate promotional material on the tables. This may be in the form of beer mats or it may be printed on place mats of paper or plastic. Inherently promotional material provided in this way is removable, and limited in scope.

An object of the present invention is to provide a table covering which may be used to convert the table top into a promotional medium, is not readily removed or damaged by customers, and yet may be replaced after a specified length of time.

Thus according to the present invention a table covering for application to a table top comprises four layers,

- i) a substrate of release paper to be removed before application of the covering to a table top,
- ii) a semi-permanent adhesive layer to be in contact with the table top
- iii) a carrier layer of clear polymer film having a thickness of not more than 100 microns
- iv) a display layer which is printed on the carrier layer

The method by which the table covering of the present invention is used to finish a table top comprises providing a smooth table surface which is free of protuberances, and applying to the table top the table covering described in the preceding paragraph, whilst removing the layer (i) of release paper from the table covering to allow the semi-permanent adhesive layer (ii) to adhere to the table top. When necessary any air bubbles which are trapped beneath the table covering may be forced out using a suitable roller or squeegee.

The table covering is made to cover substantially the whole of the table top, and preferably any gap between the covering and the edge of the table is no more than 50 mm. If desired the table covering may be of a shape and size to wrap over a part or parts of one or more edges of the table top to which it is applied, but preferably the shape and size of each table covering in accordance with the invention is such as to avoid the table covering having to be folded or pleated when it is applied to the table.

The printed display layer of the covering may extend over the whole area of the table covering, or it may be discontinuous, and the printed display may consist of decorative and/or advertising material.

It is a feature of the invention that the nature of the table covering is not to be readily visible to the customer using the table and hence the carrier layer of polymer film and the semi-permanent adhesive layer beneath are to be totally

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clear, the appearance of the covering thus being in the nature of a finish on the table top. For this reason the thickness of the film is important, the preferred thickness of the clear film being in the range, 10 to 100 microns, more preferably 15 to 70 microns. The polymer used for the film is preferably flexible thermoplastic polyester such as polyethylene terephthalate (PET)

In use the table covering of the invention is to be replaced at regular intervals of, for example, one month. Hence the role of the semi-permanent adhesive is to grip the table top securely whilst the table covering is in use, and yet allow complete removal and replacement of the table covering at the end of the desired period. The preferred adhesives are water clear, solvent based acrylic adhesives.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention the table covering includes a second layer of polymer film which is to protect the printed layer and is glued over the printed display layer by means of a second layer of adhesive. The second layer of polymer film is to be of material approved for food contact applications. The glue by which it is applied is preferably an adhesive which is approved for indirect food contact applications. The preferred materials are clear oriented polypropylene (OPP) film for the protective polymer layer, and clear EVA adhesive for the glue.

Preferably the second layer of polymer film has a thickness in the range 5 to 20 microns

The method used to apply the table covering is simple, but care must be taken to make sure that the surface to which the covering is applied is clean and smooth and free of protuberances such as could be caused by blemishes, or solid particles (such as salt) on the surface.

Since the carrier layer of polymer film is itself thin, and some precision is required in applying the table covering to the table top, in a further embodiment of the invention an additional layer of release paper is provided on the top surface of the table covering, ie on the surface opposite to that of the substrate layer (i). The second layer of release paper is provided to make handling of the table covering easier. Depending upon the nature of the carrier layer of the table covering, it may be removed before or after application of the table covering to a table top has been carried out. In general, the thinner the carrier layer the more likely it is that the second layer of release paper will be retained on the table covering until after the table covering has been applied to a table top.

The invention will now be described in more detail by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a sketch showing a magnified cross section of a part of a table covering according to the invention

Figure 2 is a similar sketch of a second embodiment of the invention

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Figure 3 is a sketch showing a plan view of a rectangular table covering in accordance with the invention

Figure 4 is a sketch showing a plan view of a circular table covering in accordance with the invention on a table top

Figure 5 is a sketch showing a plan view of another embodiment of circular table covering in accordance with the invention

Figure 6 is a sketch showing a perspective view of the rectangular table covering of figure 3 during its application to a table top.

Figure 7 is a sketch showing a perspective view of a square table covering during its application to a square table top.

The table covering shown in figure 1 consists of a substrate 1 of release paper, a layer of semi-permanent adhesive 2 on a carrier layer of polymer 3 bearing a printed display layer 4, and, glued over the printed layer 4 by means of a second layer of adhesive 2a, a second layer of polymer film 3a.

The semi-permanent adhesive of layer 2 is a solvent based water clear acrylic adhesive and layer 2 has a thickness of approximately 25 microns.

The carrier layer 3 is made from a commercially available clear PET film having a thickness of 38 microns, printed on which is the printed layer 4.

The printed display layer 4 is protected by the second layer of polymer 3a which is made from clear oriented polypropylene film having a thickness of approximately 8 microns. The adhesive layer 2a, by means of which the second polymer layer is attached, is made from a clear EVA adhesive.

The embodiment shown in figure 2 is similar to that shown in figure 1 except that the table covering of figure 2 includes, on the second polymer layer 3a, a second layer of release paper 5 to assist in application of the covering to a table top.

Figure 3 shows in plan from above, a rectangular table covering in which the carrier layer of clear PET film 6 carries a printed layer 7 which is smaller in area than the carrier layer.

Figure 4 is a plan view showing a circular table covering in position on a circular table top 8. The table covering is also circular and its size is such that the edge 9 of the carrier layer of clear polymer film 10 is 10mm from the edge of the table top.

The distance of the edge 11 of the printed area of the table covering from the edge 9 of the clear polymer film is not critical, and depends upon the nature of the display material comprising the printed layer.

Figure 5 shows, in plan from above, a circular table covering in which the carrier layer of clear polymer film 12 has tabs 13 around its edges which are designed in use to wrap over the edge of a circular table top to provide additional anchorage for the table covering.

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Figure 6 is a perspective view illustrating the method of application of the table coverings of this invention, using as an example the rectangular table covering of figure 3.

The table covering is applied from one end of a rectangular table top 14, and in this case the carrier layer 15 is long enough to wrap over the end 16 of the table top. During application the release paper layer (not shown in the sketch) is removed from the table covering to expose the semi-permanent adhesive layer of the table covering and enable the table covering to adhere to the smooth table top which has been provided.

Figure 7 is a perspective view illustrating the application to a table top of another table covering in accordance with the invention.

In this case a square table covering 17 is being applied to a square table top 18, a layer of release paper 19 being steadily removed from the table covering to expose adhesive as the table covering is applied.

The printed display layer of the table covering 17 extends over the whole area of the table covering, and the edges 20 of the table covering 17 are positioned 10mm from the edges of the table top 18, there being no wrap-over of the table covering onto the edges of the table top in this embodiment.

Claims

1. A table covering for application to a table top, said covering comprising four layers,
 - i) a substrate of release paper to be removed before application of the covering to a table top,
 - ii) a semi-permanent adhesive layer to be in contact with the table top
 - iii) a carrier layer of clear polymer film having a thickness of not more than 100 microns
 - iv) a display layer which is printed on the polymer film
2. A table covering according to claim 1 in which the thickness of the clear polymer film is in the range 10 to 100 microns
3. A table covering according to claim 2 in which the thickness of the clear polymer film is in the range 15 to 70 microns
4. A table covering according to claim 1, 2 or 3 in which the clear polymer film layer is a polyethylene terephthalate film.
5. A table covering according to any one of the preceding claims which includes a second layer of polymer film which is to protect the display layer and is glued over the display layer by means of a second layer of adhesive, the second layer of polymer film being of material approved for food contact applications.
6. A table covering according to claim 5 in which the second layer of polymer film is made from clear oriented polypropylene.
7. A table covering according to claim 5 or 6 in which the second layer of polymer film has a thickness in the range 5 to 20 microns.
8. A table covering according to claim 5, 6 or 7 in which the second layer of adhesive is a clear EVA adhesive
9. A table covering according to any one of the preceding claims which comprises additionally a second layer of release paper on the surface of the covering opposite to the said substrate, the second layer of release paper being an aid to handling of the covering during its application to a table top.
10. A table covering according to any one of the preceding claims in which the printed display layer is discontinuous.

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11. A table covering according to any one of the preceding claims in which the semi-permanent adhesive layer comprises a solvent-based water clear acrylic adhesive.

12. A method of finishing a table top which comprises providing a smooth table surface which is free of protuberances, and applying to the table top a table covering in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, the layer (i) of release paper being removed from the table covering to allow the semi-permanent adhesive layer (ii) to adhere to the table top.

13. A method of finishing a table top according to claim 12 in which the table covering includes a second layer of release paper on the surface of the covering opposite to the said substrate, to facilitate handling of the table covering.

14. A method according to claim 12 or 13 in which the edge or edges of the table covering which are on the table top are not more than 50mm, from the edge of the table top

15. A method according to claim 12, 13 or 14 in which the table covering is of a shape and size to wrap over a part or parts of one or more edges of the table top to which it is applied.

16. A table covering substantially as described herein in relation to any one of the accompanying drawings.

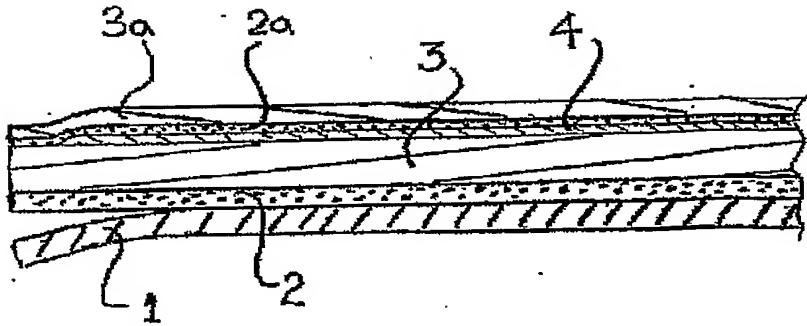


FIG 1

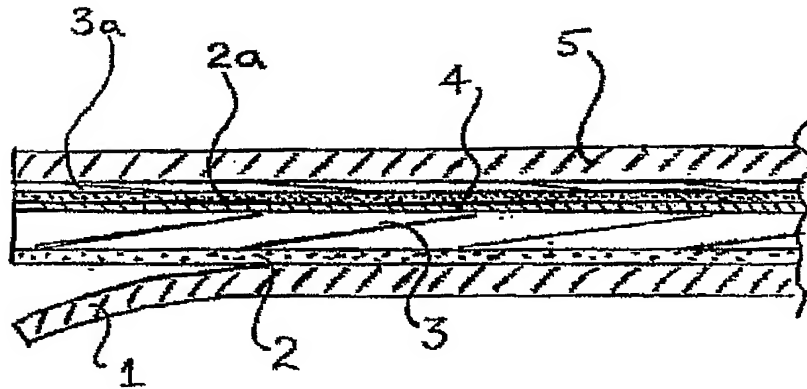


FIG 2

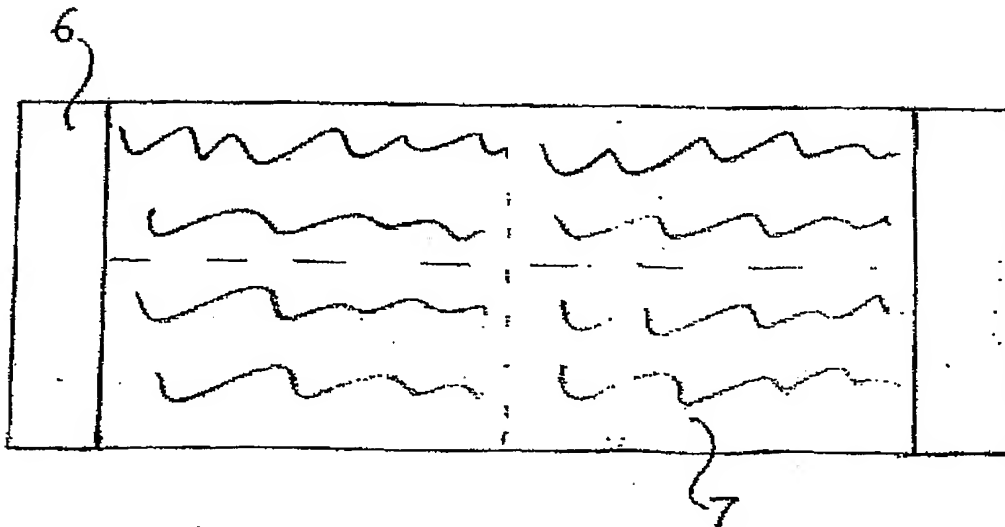


FIG 3

FIG 4.

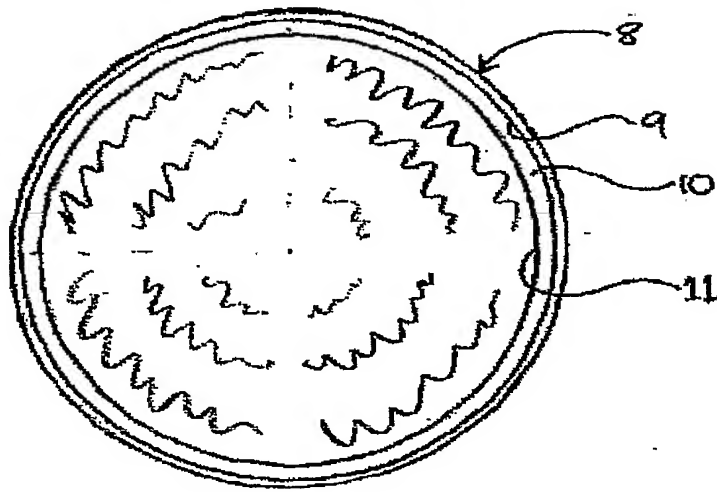


FIG 5

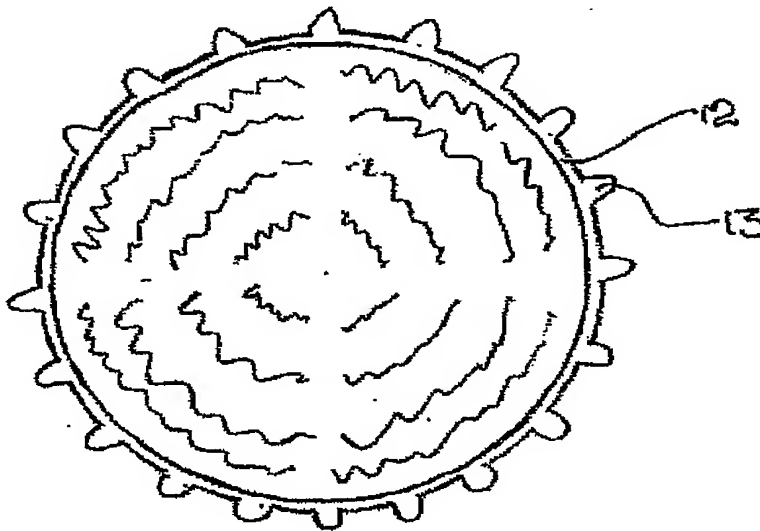


FIG 6:

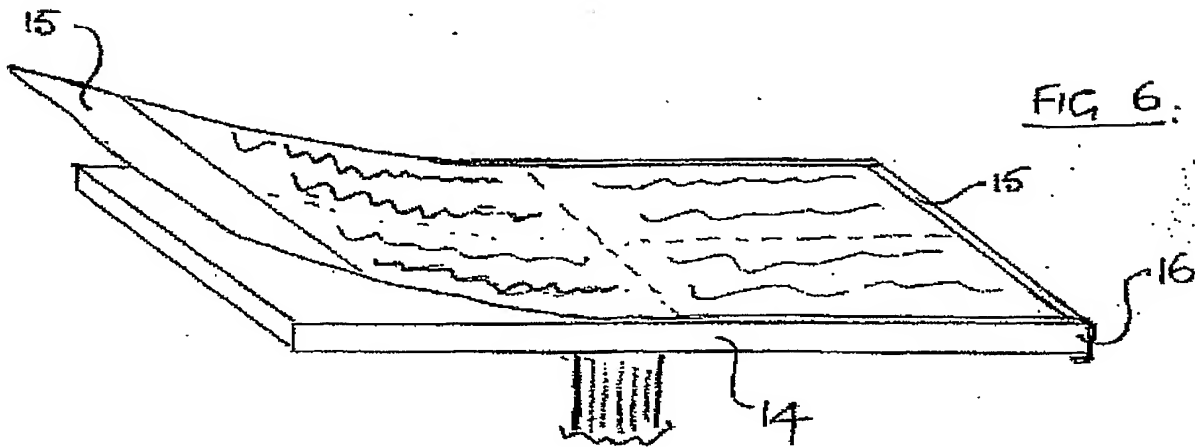


FIG 7

